

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method of inhibiting a T cell response to an antigen, comprising contacting T cells with mesenchymal stem cells modified to present the antigen, thereby inhibiting a T cell response to said antigen.

2. A method of inhibiting a T cell response to an antigen, comprising administering to a host human mesenchymal stem cells modified to present the antigen, thereby inhibiting a T cell response to said antigen.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the antigen is an autoantigen.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the mesenchymal cells are autologous to the host.

5. A method of inhibiting a T cell response to an antigen, comprising administering to a host human mesenchymal stem cells which express a molecule that blocks costimulation of T cells such that the T cell response to an antigen is inhibited.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the molecule is membrane-bound.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein the molecule is CTLA-4.

8. The method of claim 5 wherein the molecule is a cell-soluble protein.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the molecule is CTLA4-Ig fusion protein.

10. A method of inhibiting a T cell response to an antigen, comprising administering to a host human mesenchymal stem cells which are modified to express a) the specific antigen; and b) a molecule that blocks costimulation of T cells, such that the T cell response to the antigen is inhibited.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the antigen is an autoantigen.
12. The method of claim 10 wherein the mesenchymal cells are autologous to the host.
13. The method of claim 10 wherein the molecule is membrane-bound.
14. The method of claim 13 wherein the molecule is CTLA-4.
15. The method of claim 10 wherein the molecule is a cell-soluble protein.
16. The method of claim 15 wherein the molecule is CTLA4-Ig fusion protein.

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